

love reigns supreme. Yet the golden hours are brief: the

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priest is recalled to his religion of death, and he cannot

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resist the call, for all the training of years which has con-

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firmed and increased his mystical tendency comes back,

*I*  
and he is helpless. Thus the natural life is forsaken for

*j*  
the illusions and dogmas of a creed; and Albine, whom Serge has loved, is left forlorn with her unborn babe, to lie down and die amid the perfume of the flowers with which she has strewn her "bed. Serge it is who casts the symbolical pinch of earth upon her coffin, for he has resumed his ministry among the brutish peasants, dedicating all his efforts to slay the sex given him by his God, for instead of living as a man he must obey the command of his Church and live as an eunuch.

After that battle with nature and love, there comes a companion picture: the fall of Hélène Mouret in "line Page d'Amour" (X). She has hitherto led an absolutely blameless life, but a sudden passion sweeps her off her feet. A tragic sombreness attends the episode. No glamour is cast over woman's frailty in Zola's pages. If

Hfi&ne tastes an hour of intoxication she is punished for it as frightfully as any moralist could desire. Jeanne, her fondly loved daughter, who is devoured by jealous hysteria, dies as the result of her lapse; and it is only afterwards, in pity as it were, that Hd&ne is granted the chance of beginning her life afresh.

Then the series continues. All the Eougons — excepting one, Pascal, whom the novelist keeps back till the end — have now been dealt with, the Mourets also, and the chronicle of the bastard Macqttart branch begins. Antoine Macq<sup>uart</sup> has three children, Lisa, Gervaise, and Jean, and it is Lisa